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EXTRA-TIME PENALTY SAVES BEDFORD

UPROAR AS STURROCK FOILS WYCOMBE

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Bedford Town 3 Wycombe Wanderers 3

A MID disorderly scenes, Southern League Bedford Town, so often the ruin of the F A Cup hopes of senior clubs, were saved from defeat against Wycombe Wanderers, the Isthmian League side, by a disputed penalty in extra time.

This first round tie was 207 minutes old when Rundle, the Wycombe centre-half, attempted to breast a harmless ball in the penalty area.

Referee M. Sinclair ruled that he had handled, and after angry scenes in which it seemed the referee might be attacked by invading spectators, Sturrock scored the equaliser.

Several minutes elapsed before the ritual of the last three minutes could be played out, and at the end the referee had to be protected by officials.

Wycombe's secretary, Mr. Tom Hayter, said afterwards: "This was a cruel decision, and Rundle is in tears. It is so unfortunate because the referee controlled the match perfectly otherwise."

AMATEURS AHEAD

Worley scores

The amateurs seemed to have the match won when, in the seventh minute of extra time, Merrick drew out Collier and scored Wycombe's 92nd goal in all competitions this season.

Bedford failed utterly to crush the amateurs when they had the chance. The only goal of the first half came when Wycombe's goalkeeper Maskell rashly left his line as Sturrock centred. The ball curled out of his outstretched fingers into the goal.

Wycombe equalised eight minutes after the interval when Bates shot a free kick right-footed at the defensive wall and struck home the rebound left-footed from 30 yards.

In the 80th minute Wycombe took the lead when Beck centred. Collier made a similar mistake to Maskell's, and Horsman headed into an empty goal. Within a minute Bedford forced a corner and Skinn was up to head the equaliser.

Won the toss

Wycombe won the toss for the choice of venue for the second replay, which will take place on their ground on Saturday (3 p.m.). The winners visit Oxford United in the second round.

BEDFORD TOWN.—Collier; Morgan, Skinn, Willis, Corlett; Sturrock, Paton, Fogg, Cooley, Benning.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS.—J. Maskell; J. Beck, F. Royston; B. Baker, L. Rundle, C. Gale; L. Worley, K. Samuels, P. Bates, A. Horsham, L. Merrick.

REFEREE.—M. St. Clair (Guildford).

FOOTBALL

Bedford saved by harsh penalty decision

FROM A STAFF REPORTER

Bedford Town 3, Wycombe Wanderers 3

A penalty by Sturrock two minutes from the end of extra time at Bedford last night kept the last season's giant-killers in this season's F.A. Cup competition. The decision, which seemed harsh, was given against Rundle for alleged hand ball when the ball seemed to bounce up and hit him on the forearm.

It denied the amateurs of Wycombe a victory that their more skilful forward line seemed to have ensured, and led to angry scenes at the end as the referee had to be escorted off the field. Bedford wanted a neutral ground, but eventually a coin was tossed and Wycombe won the right to stage the third match on their own ground next Saturday.

ATROCIOUS SHOOTING

The first 45 minutes provided more excitement than skilful football. Twice Wycombe were in front, on the first occasion for all of a minute, yet had Bedford seized their chances, the second half would have been unnecessary let alone extra time!

Bedford realized at once that the wings held the path to success by forcing defenders to turn on a sticky pitch. Unfortunately their crosses and their shooting were equally atrocious. Ironically, a cross did bring the one goal of the half when Sturrock swung his right boot and the ball curled off its outside edge over the clutching fingers of the Wycombe goalkeeper, who had advanced a good five yards from his line.

At this stage it looked, for all their failings, as if Bedford's more powerful game would carry the day. But Wycombe used their wingers to greater effect after the interval, and with Baker prominent, the second half showed a different, if still muddy picture. After eight minutes the scores were level again as Bates collected the rebound of his own right-footed free kick off the Bedford wall, gave the second chance to his left foot, and beat Collier to the wide. When Horsman made it 2-1 with his head from Beck's centre it no more than reflected the play.

But Wycombe levelled the score when Skinn came up for a corner, bent down to his knees, and nodded the ball past Maskell. With time running out, first Merrick shot inches over the bar and then Benning headed wide of a post. Sturrock had one last chance, but missed it, and the match moved on to extra time.

The odds were now definitely against the amateurs, but they continued to rely on the talents of their forwards, and when Merrick was allowed to steal unnoticed between Morgan and Collins to prod home Sturrock's hopeful cross the night seemed to be theirs. This goal seemed an apt summary of the match. On the one hand, the cross should easily have been cleared: on the other, two wingers had apparently proved their value. The referee, however, thought otherwise, and Bedford were given a reprieve.

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